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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3259  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 002835

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/LOGGERFO

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#)  
SUBJECT: MGGZ01 - ISRAELI GAZA INCURSION - JERUSALEM JULY 7  
SITREP

REF: JERUSALEM 2825

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

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Summary  
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¶1. (C) The casualty rates associated with ongoing IDF operations spiked sharply on July 6 and 7, with at least 21 Palestinians reported killed and over 65 wounded; one Israeli soldier was reported killed and several more wounded. At least eight Qassam rockets were fired, with no reported injuries. IDF airstrikes throughout Gaza continue. An IDF raid in the West Bank nearly captured al-Aqsa Brigades' leader Zakaria Zubeidi and several other wanted militants. PA Interior Minister Said Siyyam has issued several calls for PA Security Forces to take action against the IDF; the PASF appear to be largely ignoring his orders and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) has reportedly instructed Siyyam to stop issuing such instructions. Post is planning to evacuate approximately 87 American citizens via the Erez crossing point on the morning of July 8. Crossings into Gaza from Egypt and Israel are reported closed.

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Military Developments  
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¶2. (C) Military operations on July 6 and 7 resulted in a sharp spike in casualties and wounded, with at least 21 Palestinians reported killed, over 65 injured (11 critically), one Israeli soldier killed, and several more wounded. A large number of teenagers and children are reported among the injured; TV images of the fighting show Palestinian gunmen engaging with the IDF while groups of curious children in the immediate vicinity look on.

¶3. (C) IDF operations continue in three main sectors of the Gaza strip. IDF forces in the north have reached the outskirts of Beit Lahiya, encircled the town of Beit Hanoun, and control the areas of the former Nisanit, Dugit, and Eli Sinai settlements. In the center, the IDF is operating in the area of Khan Younis, and Abbasan and al-Faraheen villages. In the south, the IDF controls the Rafah airport and the nearby village of Shoka. The most intense conflicts on July 6 took place in the Atatra section of northern Gaza and around the village of Abbasan in the center.

¶4. (U) At least 8 Qassam rockets were fired at Israel on July 16. Israeli media reports that three landed in the town of Sderot, one in the town of Kfar Aza, one near Kibbutz Zikim (south of Ashkelon) and three in an open field near the Gaza

border. No injuries were reported.

¶5. (C) IDF airstrikes continue throughout Gaza. Five Palestinian gunmen were reported killed in an IAF strike on July 6 in northern Gaza, a Palestinian gunman was reportedly killed in a missile strike near Jabiliyya refugee camp on July 6, and three Palestinian gunmen were reported killed on the morning of July 7 near Atatra.

¶6. (U) In the West Bank, an IDF raid on Jenin on July 6 apparently came close to capturing al-Aqsa Brigades' leader Zakaria Zubeidi, PIJ leader Mahmoud al-Sadi, and PIJ military wing leader Ahmad Jaradat as they attended wake for an al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade gunman killed on July 5. The militant leaders escaped and, according to Israeli media reports, quickly contacted journalists to report their successful escape. A battle broke out between the IDF and remaining gunmen, resulting in the death of one Palestinian gunman and the wounding of at least six others.

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Political Developments  
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¶7. (SBU) A London "al-Hayat" article claims that Hamas has revised its demands and now seeks the release of approximately 100 female prisoners and 30 males who have served at least 20 years received wide media coverage.

¶8. (SBU) Prime Minister Ismael Haniyyah visited the wounded; Israeli press reports quote him as saying the IDF offensive is a "crime against humanity" and "a desperate effort to undermine the Palestinian government under the pretext of a search for the missing soldier." Palestinian media quote Haniyyah as also saying the only solution for the current crisis is a diplomatic one.

¶9. (C) PA Interior Minister Said Siyyam has issued instructions over the course of the week directing all Palestinian security forces to deploy into areas of confrontation with Israel; those security forces not directly linked to Hamas reportedly ignored his orders. On July 6, Siyyam reportedly issued instructions ordering Palestinian security forces to take action against the IDF; again, those forces not linked to Hamas do not appear to have heeded the instructions and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) has reportedly told Siyyam to stop issuing such instructions and instructed the PASF not to engage the IDF.

¶10. (SBU) Hamas has called on its supporters to publicly demonstrate against the incursion after noon prayers on July 7, and has asked for Imams to address the situation in their Friday sermons. IDF police on July 6 arrested Hassan Khreisheh, the second deputy PLC speaker, as he attempted to enter the West Bank via the Allenby Bridge from Jordan. Khreisheh (an Independent with ties to Hamas) had reportedly been meeting with parliamentarians in Europe, including some Israeli Knesset members.

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AMCIT Update  
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¶11. (C) On the morning of July 8, Post is planning to move approximately 87 of the estimated 130 American citizens requesting assistance in leaving Gaza via the Erez crossing point. Post is liaising with Embassy Tel Aviv, COGAT, and Palestinian Presidential Guard, and is in the process of contacting the individual Americans.

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Humanitarian Update  
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¶12. (SBU) Fuel: According to Paltrade contacts, the Karni/al-Mintar crossing and Nahal Oz fuel transfer station were closed July 6 and remained closed as of 11:30 am, July

¶7. Gaza gas station owner Abu Hisham al-Khozendar estimated that 60 to 65 percent of gas stations have no stocks. Both al-Khozendar and WHO representative Mahmud Daher predicted that Gaza will run out of gasoline in two days. Per reftel, based on average daily consumption rates, Gaza should run out of gasoline July 7 and has already run out of diesel and cooking gas.

¶13. (SBU) Crossings: The Erez crossing remains closed. The Rafah crossing remains closed.

¶14. (SBU) Electricity: USAID Gaza-based field staff reported that the IDF struck the main electrical transformer in Atatra on July 7. Repair crews and other municipal employees have been unable to enter the area, and the municipality has approached USAID for assistance in coordinating access with the GOI. USAID Gaza-based field staff reported that there continues to be no electricity and no water in Rafah as reported in reftel. The Rafah municipality has also approached USAID for assistance in coordinating access for its municipality workers.

WALLES